



United Faculty and Academic Staff (UFAS)

American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Local 223

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Good afternoon. My name is Chad Alan Goldberg, and I am an associate professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. I'm also the president of United Faculty and Academic Staff (UFAS), a non-collective bargaining union of academic staff and faculty at UW – Madison and UW – Extension.

As many of you know, UFAS members have played an active role in the long struggle to extend collective bargaining rights to UW faculty and academic staff. The guiding principle behind this struggle is the concept of choice – that academic professionals should have the right to choose to form a collective bargaining unit without interference from any party, be it the state or the employer.

While UW Administration publicly agreed with the principle of faculty and academic staff choice at the time, their actions since passage of collective bargaining suggest they believe otherwise. A relationship with an outside consultant hired at taxpayer expense has resulted in UW Administration restricting communication among academic staff and faculty, along with a collection of misleading and, at times, intimidating memoranda concerning collective bargaining.

It's unfortunate that UW Administration would undermine our collective bargaining efforts in this manner; it's reprehensible that they should do so with public funds. In my nine years at UW – Madison (three of them tenured), I've witnessed state funds to my campus dwindle.

This year, my department's graduate admission committee has had to slash admissions by about 25% in order to provide adequate funding for new admits, and even then we lose talented and promising graduate students to better-funded programs elsewhere in the country.

Our world-class university system is in dire financial straits. Every dime we receive needs to be invested in our classrooms, our libraries, our laboratories... NOT in union-busting.

Wisconsin currently stands alone in its ability to use public funds to prevent a group of citizens from exercising a basic human right. That's not progress – it's atrocious.

We should follow the lead of other states, including Montana, Texas, Illinois, New York and California, which already have laws similar to Senate Bill 523.

Like all workers, faculty and academic staff should have the right to choose collective bargaining representation without interference, and employer roadblocks to this process should never be funded by Wisconsin taxpayers. On behalf of the membership of UFAS and the academic workforce for whom we advocate, I strongly urge you to support this common-sense piece of legislation. Thank you, and I'll now be happy to address any questions you may have.